

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

*Please amend the claims as follows:*

1. (currently amended) A printing device for printing sheet elements (1) that are serially fed to the printing device, which sheet elements comprise a surface material, in particular product labels made of temperature-sensitive paper or paper substitute materials, comprising a feed device for feeding the sheet elements (1) to a print head which acts on the sheet element (1), wherein said print head comprises a thermal slat (3) which is supported flexibly by a carrier device (8) such that between the thermal slat (3) and the sheet element (1) a counterpressure surface is formed at a predefined surface pressure on the sheet element (1) to be printed,  
**characterised in that** the thermal slat (3) is associated with an adaptor means (7) that is exchangeable together with said thermal slat (3), with which adaptor means (7) the excursion of [[the]] a resilient holding means (9) for the thermal slat (3) can be adjusted such that the surface pressure is constant irrespective of the width of the thermal slat (3).
2. (original) The printing device according to claim 1,  
**characterised in that** the adaptor means (7) is an actuator, by way of which the excursion of the holding means (9) is controllable.
3. (original) The printing device according to claim 2,  
**characterised in that** the actuator is controllable piezoelectrically, by way of a motor drive, pneumatically, or hydraulically.

4. (original) The printing device according to claim 1,  
**characterised in that** the adaptor means (7) is a spacer affixed to the thermal slat (3), wherein the thickness of said spacer is proportional to the width of the thermal slat (3).
  
5. (original) The printing device according to claim 1,  
**characterised in that** the adaptor means (7) is a pin element affixed to the thermal slat (3), wherein the length of said pin element is proportional to the width of the thermal slat (3).